

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. **(Original)** A digital signature method, comprising:
 - converting, on a computer system, digital data representative of a document into a predetermined format;
 - applying the predetermined format and a viewer program to a hash function to mathematically operate on the predetermined format and the viewer program and provide a message digest, the viewer program for viewing the predetermined format that is a representation of the document; and
 - encrypting the message digest using a private key to provide a digital signature.
2. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1, further comprising incorporating into the digital signature a file including one or more parameters specifying an environment of the computer system at the time of creation of the digital signature.
3. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 2, wherein said one or more parameters includes one or both of a type and version of one or more of the following: a video card, monitor, operating system, application program, and signing interface library of the computer system.

4. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1 further comprising timestamping the digital signature using a trusted source.

5. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1 further comprising notarizing the digital signature.

6. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1, wherein the predetermined format is a bitmap representation.

7. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1 further comprising:

transmitting the digital signature, predetermined format, and viewer program over a network to a receiver computer system;

decrypting the digital signature using a public key corresponding to the private key, to recover the message digest;

applying the predetermined format and the viewer program to a hash function, to mathematically operate on the predetermined format and the viewer program to provide a calculated message digest;

comparing the calculated message digest with the recovered message digest; if the calculated message digest is identical to the recovered message digest, providing the predetermined format using the viewer program.

8. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1, wherein providing the predetermined format using the viewer program comprises one or more of the following:

viewing the predetermined format on a monitor using the viewer program;
printing the predetermined format using the viewer program; and
faxing the predetermined format using the viewer program.

9. **(Original)** The digital signature method of claim 1, wherein the viewer program is an executable program.

10. **(Original)** A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of claim 1.

11. **(Original)** A system, comprising:
a network;
a first computer system including a processor and memory including digital data representative of a document and a viewer module, said processor to convert the document into a predetermined format, apply the predetermined format and viewer module to a hash function and provide a message digest, encrypt the message digest with a private key to provide a digital signature, and transmit the predetermined format, viewer module, and digital signature over the network; and

a second computer system including a processor and memory, said processor to receive the predetermined format, viewer module, and digital private key, recover the message digest, apply the predetermined format and viewer module to a corresponding hash function to provide a calculated message digest, compare the calculated message digest with the recovered message digest, and view the predetermined format with the viewer program to provide a representation of the document, if the calculated message digest is identical to the recovered message digest.

12. **(Original)** The system of claim 11 wherein the network comprises an Internet.

13. **(Original)** The system of claim 11, wherein the predetermined format comprises a bitmap representation of the document.

14. **(Original)** The system of claim 11, wherein the viewer module is an executable program.

15. **(Original)** The system of claim 11, wherein the processor, on the first computer system, to further transmit a file including one or more parameters specifying an environment of the first computer system at the time of creation of the digital signature.

16. **(Original)** The system of claim 15, wherein said one or more parameters includes one or both of a type and version of one or more of the following: a video monitor, operating system, application program, and signing interface library of the first computer system.

17. **(Original)** The system of claim 11 further comprising a timestamp server coupled to the network, said timestamp server to receive over the network, digitally timestamp, and transmit over the network the predetermined format, viewer module, and digital signature.

18. **(Original)** A method, comprising:
converting, on a computer system, a document into a predetermined format;
appending the predetermined format with a viewer program to provide a file archive, the viewer program for viewing the predetermined format that is a representation of the document;
applying the file archive to a hash function to mathematically operate on the file archive and provide a message digest; and
encrypting the message digest using a private key to provide a digital signature.

19. **(Original)** The method of claim 18, wherein the predetermined format is a bitmap representation.

20. **(Original)** The method of claim 18 further comprising:

transmitting the digital signature and the file archive over a network to a receiver computer system;

decrypting the digital signature using a public key corresponding to the private key, to recover the message digest;

applying the file archive to a hash function, to mathematically operate on the file archive to provide a calculated message digest;

comparing the calculated message digest with the recovered message digest; if the calculated message digest is identical to the recovered message digest, providing the predetermined format using the viewer program.

21. **(Original)** The method of claim 20, wherein providing the predetermined format using the viewer program comprises one or more of the following:

viewing the predetermined format on a monitor using the viewer program;

printing the predetermined format using the viewer program; and

faxing the predetermined format using the viewer program.

22. **(Original)** The method of claim 18, wherein the viewer program is an executable program.

23. **(Original)**A computer readable medium having stored therein instructions for causing a central processing unit to execute the method of claim 18.

24. **(Canceled).**